

VZCZCXRO2680
RR RUEHNZ
DE RUEHWL #0603 2290424
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 170424Z AUG 07
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4589
INFO RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA 0614
RUEHNZ/AMCONSUL AUCKLAND 1435

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 000603

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

FOR DINT/USGS/RESTON/RKENNY

E.O. 12985: N/A
TAGS: OTRA SENV CW NZ

SUBJECT: COOK ISLANDS COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR VANIA K. JORDANOVA,
REINER H. FRIEDEL, GEOFFREY D. REEVES, 5-13 AUGUST 2207

REF: STATE 114195

¶1. (SBU) Embassy welcomes and grants country clearance to Edward Kromer and Neil Ziegelman to travel to Rarotonga, Cook Islands, from 7-21 September 2007. The purpose of this visit is to perform systems maintenance of the IRIS/USGS Global Seismic Network Station.

¶2. (U) Embassy understands that country clearance is the only assistance required.

¶3. (SBU) Embassy point of contact is Political Officer Tom Walsh. Contact details are as follows:

Office: 644-462-6182
Fax: 644-472-9804
Cell: 027-446-4467
E-mail: walshtb@state.gov

Security Assessment

¶4. (SBU) The Cook Islands is a Parliamentary democracy in free association with New Zealand, on which they rely for defense and assistance in meeting low-level security threats. The Embassy is not aware of any specific threats to U.S. facilities or personnel at this time in the Cook Islands. However, in light of the worldwide security alert all visitors should heighten their security awareness and report any unusual incidents to the Regional Security Office at the Embassy in Wellington, New Zealand (telephone (64)(4)462-6000, 24 hours/day).

¶5. (SBU) Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S. and the 2002 and 2005 terrorist bombings in Bali, there has been concern that terrorists might seek to take advantage of the low level of security maintained in small island states such as the Cook Islands in order to target tourists in previously safe destinations.

New Zealand has worked with the Cook Islands to improve airport security in response to this possibility.

¶6. (U) As a result of recent military action in Iraq, there is a potential for retaliatory actions to be taken against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world. Public demonstrations carry the potential for precipitating violence directed at American citizens.

¶7. (SBU) U.S. Government facilities worldwide remain at a heightened state of alert and some have drawn down their dependents and/or personnel. These facilities may temporarily close or suspend public services from time to time for security reasons. In those instances, U.S. embassies and consulates will make every effort to provide emergency services to American citizens. Monitor the local news and maintain contact with the nearest American Embassy or U.S.

Consulate.

¶8. (U) Crime: Appropriate common sense precautions should be taken, especially at night, to avoid becoming a target of opportunity.

¶9. (U) Weather: Severe cyclones present a threat during the hurricane season; however, this is generally only from November to March.

McCormick